

# ACTION

PICTURE  
LIBRARY  
No.12 One Shilling



A SPINE-CHILLING  
HUNT FOR AN  
ANCIENT  
TREASURE!

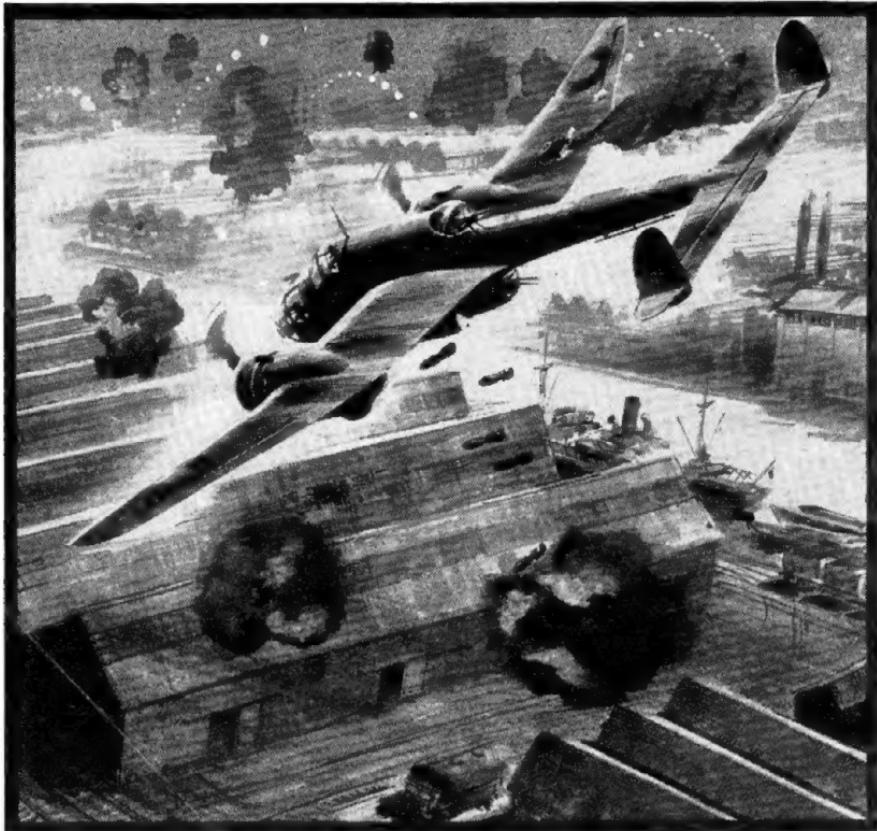


# SCORPION ISLAND

# MEN OF ACTION...

who displayed cool courage in the heat of battle

THE Dortmund-Ems canal was the chief link between central Germany and Hitler's front line forces, and on the night of 12th August, 1940, it was the target for a raid by the RAF. Acting Flight-Lieutenant Roderick Learoyd was first pilot of a Hampden aircraft taking part in the bombing. To achieve success, he had to attack at a height of



150 feet through fierce enemy flak, while blinded by searchlights. Despite this, and the fact that his aircraft was hit many times, Learoyd did not deviate from his flight path and pressed home his attack. This he did with great success and without injury to his crew, whom he brought safely home. For his bravery and determination Learoyd was awarded the Victoria Cross.

# SCORPION ISLAND

THE SECRETS OF THE TINY MEDITERRANEAN ISLAND OF KURMI HAD LAIN BURIED FOR TWO THOUSAND YEARS OR MORE... UNTIL THE ARCHAEOLOGIST'S SPADE UNCOVERED THEM... AND A WEALTH OF TROUBLE, BESIDES!



THE ETRUSCAN GALLEY, ITS GREAT OAKEN HULL SCARRED AND WEATHERBEATEN, MOVED TOWARDS KURMI, ISLE OF SCORPIONS.

SEE, O THEBUS...  
THE MOUNTAIN IS AWAKENING!  
IS IT SAFE FOR US TO  
GO TOO CLOSE?

COWARD! IT HAS  
BEEN MY CUSTOM TO PAY MY  
TITHE AT THE TEMPLE OF  
SCORPIO AFTER EVERY SAFE  
VOYAGE. THE MOUNTAIN OF  
FIRE WILL NOT STOP ME  
FROM DOING SO NOW!

A BOAT SET OFF FOR THE SHORE, LANDED WITH GOLD AND SILVER PLATE, AN EIGHTH PORTION OF THE BOOTY TAKEN IN THE YEAR-LONG VOYAGE OF CONQUEST.

AIEE! IT REMINDS  
ME OF WHEN WE SACKED THE  
CITY OF TAMARUS, O  
THEBUS. REMEMBER HOW THEY  
HURLED THE CANISTERS OF  
HOT PITCH AT US?

AYE...  
THEY REGRETTED  
IT BEFORE THE  
DAY WAS OUT,  
THOUGH!

IT TOOK TWO TRIPS TO CARRY  
THE "TITHE" TO THE TEMPLE  
AND LAY IT ON THE BARE ALTAR.



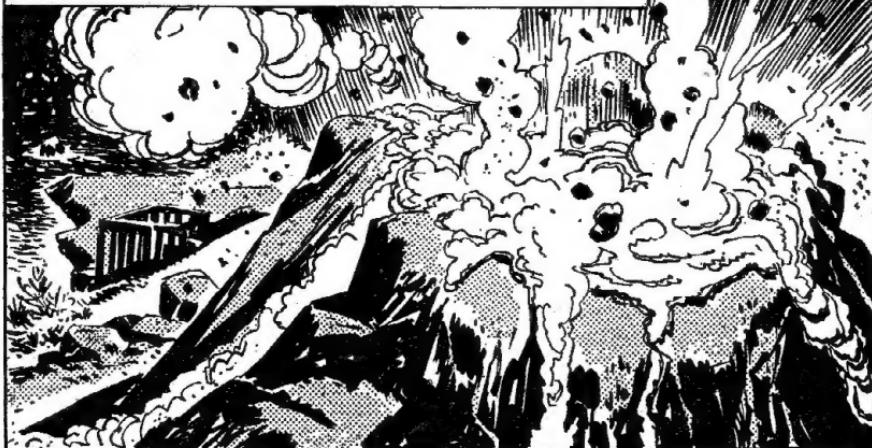
THEBUS PAID HIS SILENT HOMAGE...  
AND THE GALLEY DEPARTED WITHIN  
THE HOUR. SHAMRA, KEEPER OF THE  
TEMPLE OF THE SCORPION, WATCHED  
IT GO...



SLOWLY AND PAINFULLY, THE OLD PRIEST  
CARRIED THE OFFERING OF THEBUS, PIECE-  
BY-PIECE, INTO THE SECRET CHAMBERS HEWN  
OUT OF THE LIVING ROCK OF THE MOUNTAIN.



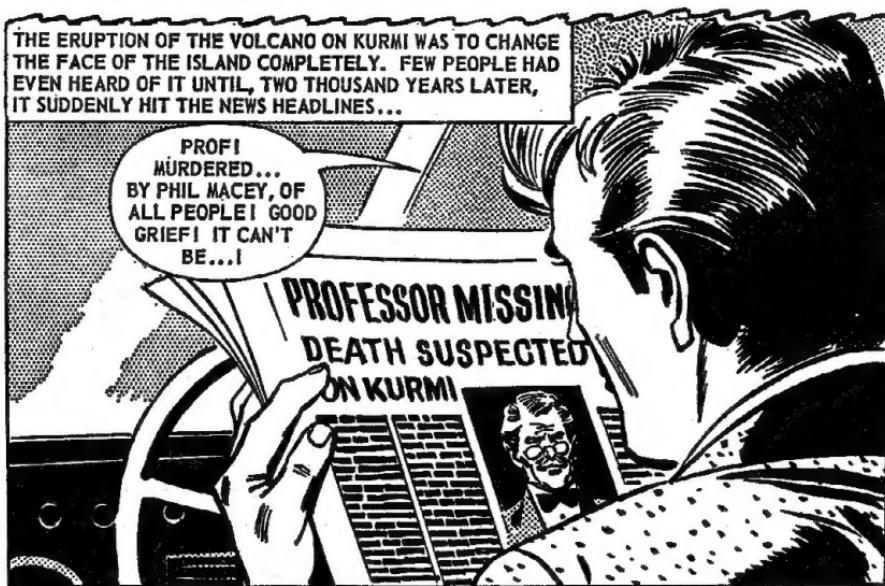
WITH EVERY PASSING HOUR, THE ERUPTIONS FROM THE VOLCANO BECAME MORE VIOLENT. SMoulderNG ASH COVERED THE HILLSIDE, AND WHITE-HOT LAVA SPILLED OVER THE LIPS OF THE CRATER.



WHEN SHAMRA SAW THE GLOWING MOLTEN STREAM OF LAVA MOVING DOWN THE MOUNTAINSIDE, HE KNEW HIS LONG YEARS OF STEWARDSHIP WERE ENDING...

I AM AN OLD MAN... TOO OLD TO FACE THE SLOW ORDEAL OF FIRE. I HAVE GIVEN MY LIFE TO THE SERVICE OF SCORPIO.... IT IS TIME FOR SCORPIO TO CLAIM HIS OWN...





PHIL MACEY WAS ONE OF JOHNNY DYSON'S CLOSEST FRIENDS AND OLD PROFESSOR KILBRIDE HAD BEEN THEIR HISTORY TEACHER AT SCHOOL.

POOR KATHY... SHE MUST BE AT HER WIT'S END! HER FATHER GONE... AND PHIL LUGGED OFF TO SOME ITALIAN JAIL. I'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING TO HELP...

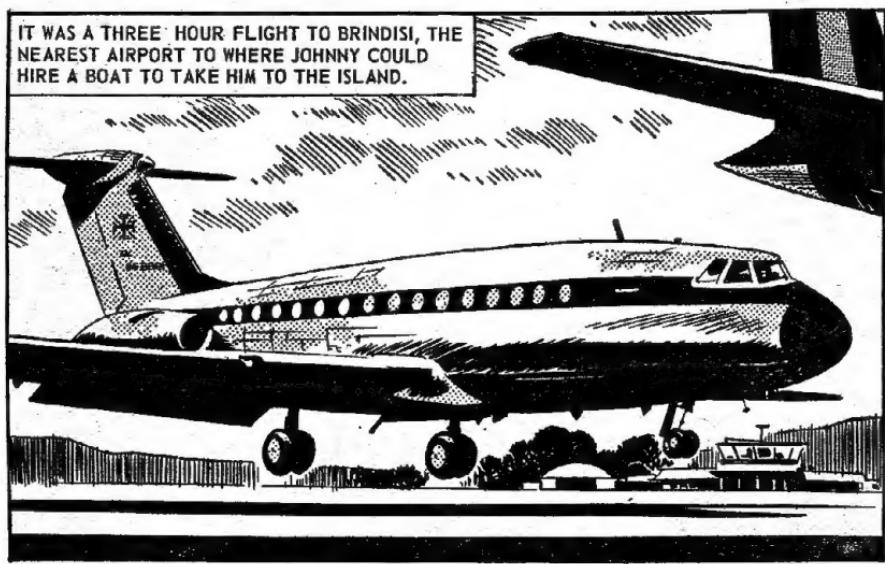


IT WAS JOHNNY DYSON'S QUICK REACTION... APART FROM HIS BALL CONTROL... THAT MADE HIM ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S UP-AND-COMING PRO FOOTBALLERS.

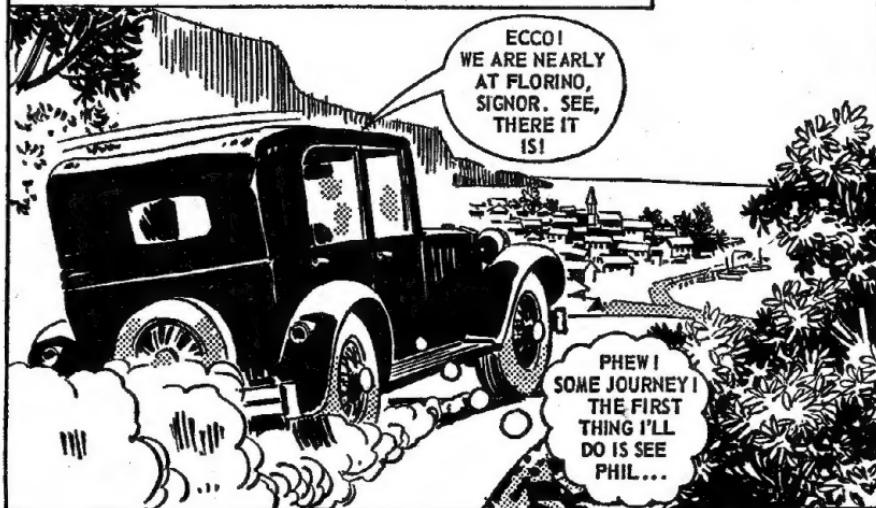
THERE'S STILL A BIT OF THE CLOSE SEASON LEFT... I HAVEN'T GOT TO REPORT FOR TRAINING FOR A FORTNIGHT. I'LL FLY OUT TO THIS KURMI PLACE... WHATEVER IT IS...



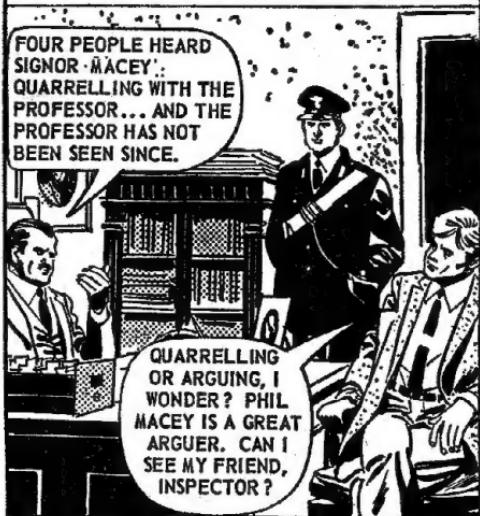
IT WAS A THREE HOUR FLIGHT TO BRINDISI, THE NEAREST AIRPORT TO WHERE JOHNNY COULD HIRE A BOAT TO TAKE HIM TO THE ISLAND.



BUT IT TOOK ANOTHER THREE HOURS TO REACH THE FISHING PORT WHERE PHIL MACEY WAS BEING HELD BY THE ITALIAN POLICE.



THE LOCAL POLICE WERE HELPFUL ENOUGH, BUT THE EVIDENCE AGAINST PHIL SEEMED DAMNING.



PHIL MACEY'S STORY WAS SOON TOLD. THE ARGUMENT BETWEEN HIM AND PROFESSOR KILBRIDE HAD BEEN ABOUT THE AGE AND ORIGINS OF CERTAIN FINDS THEY HAD MADE ON KURMI.



HE WENT STOMPING OFF ALONG THE CLIFFS AND I WANDERED BACK TO THE DIGGINGS. THAT WAS THE LAST I SAW OF HIM.



THERE SEEMED TO BE NOTHING MORE PHIL MACEY COULD TELL JOHNNY...



A FISHERMAN AGREED TO TAKE JOHNNY DYSON THE SIX MILES TO THE TINY ISLAND...



THAT IS  
KURMI, SIGNOR...  
THE ISLAND OF  
SCORPIONS.

SCORPIONS!  
THAT DOESN'T  
SOUND VERY  
HEALTHY!

KATHY KILBRIDE HAD SEEN THE BOAT APPROACHING AND, HOPING FOR WORD OF HER FIANCÉ, WAS AT THE WATER'S EDGE. SUDDENLY...

JOHNNY...  
JOHNNY DYSON!  
OH, JOHNNY...  
YOU'VE HEARD  
ABOUT PHIL AND DADDY...



I SAW IT  
IN THE PAPERS  
BACK HOME, KATHY.  
I COULDN'T  
LEAVE YOU TO  
FACE THINGS  
ALONE...

BEFORE JOHNNY COULD DO MORE THAN TRY TO REASSURE HER,  
TWO MEN CAME DOWN THE BEACH TO JOIN THEM...



KATHY INTRODUCED THE NEWCOMERS...

OH, THIS IS MISTER  
RUMERU AND CARLO, ONE OF  
HIS MEN. MISTER RUMERU WAS  
ASSISTING DADDY ON THE 'DIG'.  
THIS IS MISTER DYSON, AN  
OLD FRIEND, GINO.

HELLO, MISTER  
RUMERU. YES, I DO  
HOPE TO PERSUADE MISS  
KILBRIDE TO RETURN TO  
ENGLAND... BUT NOT JUST  
YET, I THINK.





RUMERU LED THE WAY TO THE "DIGGINGS", WHERE HE AND HIS MEN HAD TUNNELLING INTO THE MOUNTAINSIDE.

WE HAVE UNCOVERED THIS TEMPLE ... IT IS EITHER GREEK OR OF THE ETRUSCAN PERIOD. THE SIGNOR MACEY WAS ALWAYS ARGUING WITH THE PROFESSOR ON THIS POINT.

WHERE DO THE TUNNELS LEAD...?



IT WAS COOL IN THE TUNNELS, WHICH BURROWED INTO THE ONCE-MOLTEN LAVA THAT HAD COVERED THE AREA MANY CENTURIES BEFORE.

THE PROFESSOR... HE THOUGHT THERE WOULD BE CERTAIN CHAMBERS NEAR TO THE TEMPLE... PERHAPS ABOUT HERE, BUT WE HAVE NOT FOUND THEM.



LATER, WHEN THEY WERE ALONE, JOHNNY TALKED EARNESTLY TO KATHY ...

PHIL'S  
RIGHT, YOU  
KNOW... YOU OUGHT  
TO COME BACK  
TO ENGLAND  
WITH ME.

HOW CAN I,  
JOHNNY? DADDY  
WAS SO NEAR AN  
IMPORTANT DISCOVERY.  
HE WAS SURE THAT HERE  
THERE IS A KEY TO THE  
ETRUSCAN LANGUAGE, WHICH  
NO-ONE HAS BEEN ABLE  
TO DECIPIER. HE MADE  
SOME NOTES... I'LL  
SHOW THEM TO  
YOU...



PROFESSOR KILBRIDE AND HIS DAUGHTER HAD USED ONE  
OF THE BIGGER TENTS FOR THEIR LIVING QUARTERS.

THE  
NOTES  
HAVE  
GONE! BUT  
HE ALWAYS  
KEPT THEM  
IN THIS  
BOX!

PERHAPS HE HAD  
THEM ON HIM WHEN  
HE DISAPPEARED.  
WE'LL ASK RUMERU  
IF HE KNOWS...



THE ITALIAN ARCHAEOLOGIST LAUGHED WHEN JOHNNY BROUGHT UP THE SUBJECT AT A MEAL...



RUMERU KNEW NOTHING OF THE NOTES, BUT JOHNNY COULD NOT HELP NOTICING THAT THERE WAS AN-UNDERCURRENT OF TENSION IN THE AIR DURING THE MEAL.



LATER, WHEN THEY WERE ALONE, THE ITALIANS WENT ON TALKING - BUT IN WHISPERS...



AN ACCIDENT, NOW - THAT IS DIFFERENT. IT SHOULD NOT BE DIFFICULT TO ARRANGE, SI...?



NEXT DAY, KATHY AND JOHNNY SET OUT ON A TOUR OF THE ISLAND...



FIRST, THEY TRAMPED ALONG THE TOP OF THE SHEER CLIFFS ... THEN TURNED INLAND UP THE EXTINCT VOLCANO'S SIDE ...



LET'S TRY UP THERE, KATHY - IF YOU FEEL UP TO IT.

IT - IT'S HOPELESS! YET I CAN'T BELIEVE DADDY IS DEAD - SOMETHING TELLS ME HE IS NOT!

IT WAS A HARD CLIMB, BUT AT LAST THEY STOOD AT THE LIP OF THE DEAD CRATER.



I'D LIKE TO GO DOWN INTO THE CRATER - JUST TO MAKE SURE, KATHY.

YES, JOHNNY - WE MUST BE SURE!

THE INSIDE WALL OF THE CRATER WAS CRUMBLING AND LOOSE, TREACHEROUS UNDERFOOT...



JOHNNY WAS LOOKING UP AT THAT MOMENT - AND SUDDENLY HE SAW A LARGE BOULDER MOVE...



HE MOVED LIKE LIGHTNING...

AGAINST  
THE CLIFF, KATHY -  
QUICKLY!



MIRACULOUSLY, THE AVALANCHE  
MISSSED THEM BY INCHES...

OH,  
JOHNNY -  
WE-WE MIGHT  
HAVE BEEN  
KILLED!

WE  
MIGHT  
INDEED!  
DID I SEE  
SOMEONE UP  
THERE - OR WAS I  
IMAGINING  
IT?

CONSIDERABLY SHAKEN, THEY SEARCHED  
THE CRATER NEVERTHELESS. THEY FOUND  
NO TRACE OF PROFESSOR KILBRIDE, AND  
THEN CLIMBED OUT...

I - I  
DON'T FEEL  
LIKE LOOKING  
ANYWHERE  
ELSE TODAY,  
JOHNNY.

I'LL  
TAKE YOU  
BACK TO CAMP,  
KATHY.  
THAT MUST  
HAVE SHAKEN  
YOU UP  
BADLY.

AS THEY WALKED DOWN THE HILLSIDE, THE ITALIAN ARCHAEOLOGIST CAME TO MEET THEM.

SIGNORINA KATHY – THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG ?



ONCE AGAIN, JOHNNY FELT THERE WAS A FALSENESS ABOUT RUMERU'S SYMPATHY...

THERE HAS BEEN A MESSAGE FROM THE POLICE CHIEF IN FLORINO – A FISHERMAN BROUGHT IT. THE SIGNORINA MUST ATTEND THE FIRST ENQUIRY TOMORROW ON THE MAINLAND. YOU GO TONIGHT, SI?



JOHNNY FROWNED...

NO, I'LL TAKE MISS KILBRIDE TOMORROW – WE CAN USE ONE OF YOUR BOATS, CAN'T WE?

THERE WAS NO MISTAKING THE DISAPPOINTMENT ON THE MAN'S FACE AT THAT!

KATHY AND JOHNNY SET OFF  
EARLY THE NEXT MORNING



WHEN THE BOAT WAS ALMOST OUT OF SIGHT OF  
THE ISLAND, JOHNNY DYSON PUT THE MOTOR  
INTO "NEUTRAL".

BUT WHY ARE YOU  
SO SUSPICIOUS OF GINO,  
JOHNNY? WHAT DO YOU THINK  
HE COULD HAVE DONE?

I JUST DON'T  
KNOW, KATHY - BUT  
THEY WERE TOO DARNED  
KEEN TO SEE THE BACK  
OF US, FOR MY  
LIKING. NOW YOU GO ON  
TO FLORINO AND IF YOU  
DON'T HEAR FROM ME BY  
TOMORROW, BRING THE  
INSPECTOR OF POLICE  
TO THE ISLAND!

STRIPPING TO A PAIR OF SWIMMING TRUNKS,  
JOHNNY SLIPPED INTO THE WATER...

I'M SURE  
YOU'RE MISTAKEN,  
JOHNNY -  
BUT PLEASE BE  
CAREFUL!



WITH STEADY, DISTANCE-DEVOURING  
STROKES, THE STRONG YOUNG ATHLETE  
HEADED BACK TO KURMI.

I'D BETTER COME  
IN ON THE BLIND SIDE  
OF THE ISLAND - NOT THAT  
THEY'RE LIKELY TO EXPECT  
ME BACK - I HOPE!



THERE WAS NO SIGN OF ANY LOOK-  
OUT AS HE REACHED THE BASE OF  
THE CLIFFS...



HE FOUND A ROUGH PATH TO THE TOP, CLIMBED IT, AND AFTER A CAREFUL LOOK AROUND, SET OFF INLAND. TEN MINUTES LATER...

HELLO,  
PLENTY OF  
ACTIVITY?  
THEY'RE WORKING  
LIKE BEAVERS!  
I WONDER  
WHERE RUMERU  
IS...?



IN FACT, RUMERU WAS SOMEWHERE INSIDE THE TUNNELS AT THAT MOMENT...

A PRESSURE ON A HIDDEN SPRING – AND THE MASSIVE STONE DOOR SWUNG OPEN...





UP ON THE MOUNTAINSIDE, JOHNNY DYSON HAD BEEN CAUGHT UNAWARES...



JOHNNY STRAIGHTENED UP... AND WITH THE SAME MOVEMENT, FLUNG A HANDFUL OF DUST IN CARLO'S FACE...



IT WAS A SPLIT-SECOND CHANCE... AND JOHNNY  
HURLED HIMSELF FULL-LENGTH AT THE GUNMAN...

THAT'S  
TORN IT!  
THE SHOT'LL  
BRING 'EM  
RUNNING!



NEXT MOMENT, THEY WERE WRESTLING  
IN THE DUST FOR POSSESSION OF THE GUN.

SUBITO!  
QUICKLY... CARLO  
HAS CAUGHT  
SOMEONE!



JOHNNY BROKE FREE FOR LONG ENOUGH TO SWING A STUNNING RIGHT TO CARLO'S CHIN...



JOHNNY REACHED FOR THE FALLEN RIFLE... AND THREE ITALIANS HURLED THEMSELVES ON HIM...



BATTERED AND DAZED, JOHNNY WAS DRAGGED TO HIS FEET ... AS RUMERU REACHED THE SPOT.

I SLIT HIS THROAT, EH, GINO?

STUPIDO!  
SIGNOR DYSON  
IS STRONG AND THERE  
IS MUCH DIGGING TO BE  
DONE! WE WILL MAKE  
USE OF HIM,  
I THINK ...



THE YOUNG SPORTSMAN WAS TAKEN DOWN TO THE CAMP, GIVEN SOME SHOES AND CLOTHES, AND PUT TO WORK...

DO NOT TRY ANY TRICKS,  
SIGNOR, OR  
IT WILL  
BE THE WORSE  
FOR YOU!



ALL THROUGH THAT LONG, HOT DAY, JOHNNY DUG AND DUG, WITH NO IDEA WHAT IT WAS THE ITALIANS WERE AFTER.



AT SUNSET, THEY BROKE OFF WORK AND JOHNNY WAS TAKEN TO ONE OF THE OFF-SHOOTS OF THE TUNNEL, WHICH HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN BLOCKED BY RUBBLE.



IT WAS WITH SOME TREPIDATION THAT JOHNNY WATCHED THE MASSIVE STONE DOOR IN THE WALL PIVOT OPEN. RUMERU GAVE HIM A VIOLENT PUSH...



SUDDENLY, JOHNNY SAW  
ANOTHER MAN INSIDE  
THE CHAMBER... AND  
THEN RECOGNISED HIM!

PROFESSOR!  
THANK HEAVENS... YOU'RE  
STILL ALIVE!

IT - IT CAN'T BE!  
JOHN DYSON! WHAT  
ON EARTH ARE YOU  
DOING HERE, MY BOY?

JOHNNY EXPLAINED WHAT HAD  
BROUGHT HIM TO KURMI... AND  
REASSURED PROFESSOR KILBRIDE  
ABOUT HIS DAUGHTER'S SAFETY.

YOU SEE, I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO  
TRANSLATE SOME OF THE  
ETRUSCAN WRITINGS ON THAT  
TABLET WHICH WE FOUND HERE,  
WITH MY KNOWLEDGE OF THE  
PUNIC ALPHABET. IT GIVES THE  
LOCATION OF THE TREASURE  
CHAMBER.

BUT,  
PROF...  
WHAT'S THIS  
ALL ABOUT?  
WHY ARE  
THEY DOING  
THIS?

RUMERU CALLS HIMSELF AN  
ARCHAEOLOGIST, BUT THE  
GREED FOR RICHES HAS  
CORRUPTED HIM. IT WAS THE  
CUSTOM TO OFFER TREASURE  
AS A THANKSGIVING TO THE  
GODS AT THE TEMPLE... AND  
THESE MEN HOPE TO FIND  
THAT TREASURE!

SO  
THAT'S  
WHAT WE'VE  
BEEN  
DIGGING  
FOR...

JOHNNY'S HEART SANK AS HE REALISED THAT THEIR CAPTORS "HELD ALL THE CARDS".

A FORTUNE...  
THEIRS FOR  
THE TAKING!  
ISN'T THERE  
SOMETHING  
WE CAN DO?

WELL, MY BOY...  
NOW THAT I KNOW  
KATHY IS SAFE ON  
THE MAINLAND...  
THERE IS SOMETHING  
I CAN SUGGEST...

THE OLD PROFESSORIAL MANNER THAT  
JOHNNY REMEMBERED SO WELL, HAD RETURNED.

USE YOUR EYES...  
OR RATHER, YOUR  
NOSE, YOUNG DYSON!

NOSE... SMELL...  
AIR? AIR... IT'S FRESH!  
AIR'S GETTING IN HERE  
SOMEWHERE...



PROFESSOR KILBRIDE NODDED APPROVINGLY AND POINTED TO THE CEILING OF THE CHAMBER. JOHNNY CLIMBED UP TO GET A CLOSER LOOK...

SOMEWHERE  
ABOUT THERE,  
I THINK...

YOU'RE  
RIGHT, PROF...  
THERE'S A GAP HERE!  
THE VENTILATION SHAFT  
MUST BE BEHIND  
THIS STONE  
WORK!



WITH THE FLATTENED METAL CASING OF THE PROFESSOR'S PROPELLING-PENCIL, HE BEGAN TO DIG AT THE MORTAR HOLDING THE STONE IN PLACE...



FOR HOUR AFTER AGONISING HOUR, JOHNNY SCRAPED AWAY UNTIL HIS FINGERS WERE BLISTERED AND RAW. AT LAST...



PROFESSOR KILBRIDE  
HAD A CIGARETTE  
LIGHTER IN HIS  
POCKET...



IT MUST LEAD  
OUT INTO THE OPEN  
AIR SOMEWHERE... AND IF  
THE HOLE'S AS BIG AS  
THAT ALL THE WAY  
THROUGH...

THE OLD ARCHAEOLOGIST TRIED  
TO DISSUADE JOHNNY FROM WHAT  
HE INTENDED TO DO...



I MUST GO,  
PROF! WE BOTH KNOW,  
I THINK, THAT THESE  
MEN CAN'T LET US  
LIVE AFTER THIS!

I FEAR  
YOU ARE RIGHT,  
MY BOY! FOR  
HEAVEN'S SAKE  
BE CAREFUL,  
THOUGH!

IT WAS A TIGHT SQUEEZE THROUGH THE OPENING  
AND EVEN AFTER THAT, HE HAD TO INCH ALONG  
ON HIS STOMACH ...



WHEN JOHNNY HAD COVERED SOME  
DISTANCE, HE BECAME CONSCIOUS OF  
A FAINT SOUND... A RUSTLING NOISE...



HE LIT THE CIGARETTE LIGHTER... AND  
FOR A MOMENT, JOHNNY DYSON'S HEART  
STOPPED BEATING ...



THE TOP OF THE SHAFT, THE SIDES  
AND EVERY CRACK AND CRANNY WERE  
ALIVE WITH DEADLY SCORPIONS!



HIS BLOOD RAN COLD, HIS LIMBS SEEMED  
PARALYSED. BUT THERE WAS NO TURNING  
BACK NOW. HE FORCED HIMSELF TO  
MOVEMENT AGAIN...



SEVERAL TIMES HE FELT THE CREATURES FALL  
ON TO HIS BACK AND LEGS... BUT THE CLOTHES  
SAVED HIM FROM THEIR STING. AND THEN...



BY SOME MIRACLE OF BALANCE, HE STOPPED HIMSELF  
FALLING HEADLONG INTO THE GAP THAT YAWNED IN HIS PATH.



THE FAR SIDE OF THE CREVASSE  
WAS FIVE FEET AWAY. HE POISED  
HIMSELF ON THE EDGE...



HIS STRONG FOOTBALLER LEGS LAUNCHED HIM ACROSS THE GAP ...



HE REACHED THE OTHER SIDE, TEETERED ON THE EDGE, AND SCRAMBLED FORWARD TO SAFETY.



AFTER THAT, THE GOING WAS EASIER ...  
AND A FEW YARDS FARTHER ON ...

THERE THEY  
ARE... THE RATS!  
FIVE OF 'EM TO  
BE CLOBBERED ...  
SOMEHOW!

14  
JOHNNY DID NOT  
HAVE TO GO FAR  
TO FIND THE FIRST  
OF THE ITALIANS...

A QUICK CHECK THAT THERE  
WERE NO OTHERS IN THE  
VICINITY... AND THEN HE  
LEAPED...



ALTHOUGH HALF-STUNNED, THE STOCKY  
ITALIAN STILL HAD SOME FIGHT IN HIM...



BUT JOHNNY WAS QUICK TO RECOVER. HE SEIZED THE OTHER'S FOOT AND TWISTED ...

AIEEE!

IT'S NOT QUITE SO ROUGH AS THIS IN THE FIRST DIVISION, BUT WE CAN STILL TAKE CARE OF OURSELVES!

THE ITALIAN THUMPED HIMSELF SENSELESS ON THE ROCK-HARD GROUND. JOHNNY BOUND AND GAGGED HIM ...

CAN'T HAVE HIM INTERFERING... THE GAME'S ONLY JUST KICKED OFF!

THERE WERE SNORES COMING FROM THE FIRST TENT JOHNNY REACHED ...

SOUNDS LIKE A STY FULL OF PIGS, BUT I THINK IT'S ONLY ONE BLOKE!

HE CREEPT INSIDE. ALBERTO SLEPT WITH HIS MOUTH OPEN... HENCE THE SNORES. IT WAS A GAPPING MOUTH, JUST ASKING FOR A GAG TO BE STUFFED IN IT...

GUG-GUG-GUG!



HE BOUND ALBERTO  
TO HIS BED. TWO  
DOWN... THREE TO GO!

TWO OF  
THEM... AND WIDE  
AWAKE, THIS  
TIME!



THE ODDS WERE STILL THREE-  
TO-ONE AGAINST HIM...



HE PULLED OUT A FEW MORE TENT PEGS...  
AND THEN THE TENT COLLAPSED.



JOHNNY WAITED AT THE EDGE OF THE CONFUSED, STRUGGLING MASS...

DIABLO! WHAT HAPPENED...?

THIS...!

UGH!

THE OTHER ITALIAN HEARD  
THE SCUFFLE AND THE  
THUMP... AND POKED HIS  
HEAD UP IN ALARM.  
JOHNNY SWUNG AGAIN...



HASTILY, HE WRAPPED THE TENTING AND CORDS  
MORE SECURELY ABOUT THE UNCONSCIOUS FORMS...

THAT'LL  
KEEP THEM  
QUIET!



NEXT MOMENT, HOWEVER...

POR DIOS!  
THE INGLESE PIG!  
HOW DID HE  
GET FREE?

JEEPERS!  
THAT WAS  
CLOSE!

JOHNNY DIVED FOR THE  
RIFLE HE HAD DROPPED...

DIE,  
INGLESE... YOU  
KNOW TOO  
MUCH!

BUT, ROLLING FRANTICALLY, JOHNNY DODGED THE BULLETS AND SNAPPED OFF A RETURN SHOT...



YOU'RE NOT DEALING WITH THE POOR OLD PROF NOW, RUMERU! I CAN HIT BACK!

RUMERU'S NERVE GAVE...



THE BOAT...  
I MUST GET TO THE BOAT...

JOHNNY GAVE CHASE...

YOU'RE NOT GETTING AWAY AS EASY AS THAT, YOU TREACHEROUS RAT!



BUT RUMERU HAD BEEN ON KURMI FOR SOME TIME  
AND KNEW EVERY TRACK AND CONTOUR OF THE ISLAND...

HECK!



SUDDENLY, THE ITALIAN REALISED HE COULD HEAR NO SOUND OF PURSUIT ... AND REMEMBERED THAT IT WAS ONLY THIS ONE MAN WHO STOOD BETWEEN HIM AND A FORTUNE.



HE STOPPED... GOT HIS BEARINGS... AND THEN DIVED AMONG THE ROCKS BESIDE THE TRACK.



JOHNNY HAD LOST SIGHT OF HIS QUARRY, HE PAUSED... AND WENT ON HESITANTLY...





CONVULSIVELY, THE ITALIAN FLUNG HIMSELF BACKWARDS, EVEN AS THE SCORPION STRUCK.



IT WAS THE AMBUSHER WHO HAD LOST HIS LIFE... AND NOT HIS INTENDED VICTIM!

HE - HE  
WAS WAITING  
FOR ME! BUT  
WHAT - WHAT  
HAPPENED?

ONLY A POST MORTEM WOULD TELL HOW RUMERU HAD DIED... BY THE SCORPION'S DEADLY STING, OR FROM A BROKEN NECK?

EARLY THE NEXT MORNING, A MOTOR BOAT APPROACHED THE ISLAND. KATHY KILBRIDE HAD TOLD THE POLICE INSPECTOR OF JOHNNY'S SUSPICIONS AND HE HAD DECIDED TO INVESTIGATE THEM HIMSELF.



KATHY TURNED... AND THERE WAS A FAMILIAR, WELL-LOVED FIGURE...





AT LAST, THE POLICE INSPECTOR  
HAD ALL THE FACTS. THE  
ITALIANS, NOW LOOKING VERY  
SORRY FOR THEMSELVES, AND  
THE DEAD RUMERU WERE TAKEN  
TO THE POLICE LAUNCH...

SIGNOR DYSON, YOU  
ARE THE KIND OF FRIEND  
ANY MAN WOULD BE PRIVILEGED  
TO HAVE. I AM SURE SIGNOR MACEY  
WILL EXPRESS HIS GRATITUDE WHEN  
WE SEND HIM BACK TO  
JOIN YOU ALL.



THAT SAME DAY, PHIL MACEY CAME IN A POLICE BOAT BACK TO KURMI... AND TO FREEDOM.



BUT PROFESSOR KILBRIDE SOON CUT SHORT THE WELCOME AND THE CONGRATULATIONS...



THE TRANSLATIONS THE ARCHAEOLOGIST HAD MADE WHILST SHUT UP IN THE SECRET CHAMBER, HAD REALLY FIRED HIS ENTHUSIASM...

THIS'LL SWEAT SOME OF THAT FAT OFF YOU, YOU OLD JAIL-BIRD!

WHEN I THINK OF THAT QUIET, COOL PRISON CELL...

AT LAST...

HEY... HERE'S SOMETHING...

WHAT'S THAT? LET ME SEE...

MORE CAREFUL DIGGING, AND ANOTHER GREAT STONE DOOR WAS UNCOVERED...

THE INSTRUCTIONS MENTION THE SCORPION TO THE LEFT OF THE DOOR... TRY PRESSING OR TWISTING IT, PHILIP...



A FEW MOMENTS... AND THE DOOR SWUNG PONDEROUSLY OPEN...

GOSH!

BY ALL THAT'S WONDERFUL, PROF... YOU'VE HIT THE JACKPOT!





GOLD AND SILVER PLATE AND ORNAMENTS...  
TREASURE LOOTED FROM EVERY COUNTRY OF THE  
MEDITERRANEAN REGION, 2000 YEARS BEFORE...

WHAT HAVE  
YOU TO SAY NOW,  
PHILIP, MY BOY?  
THESE ITEMS ARE  
ETRUSCAN... YOU  
CANNOT DENY  
THAT!

THIS... THIS  
MUST BE SOLID  
GOLD! IT WEIGHS  
A TON!

PROFESSOR...  
I'VE SWORN NEVER TO  
ARGUE WITH YOU AGAIN! IT'S  
TOO DANGEROUS TO ALL  
CONCERNED!

NEXT DAY, JOHNNY DYSON BADE  
FAREWELL TO THEM ALL...

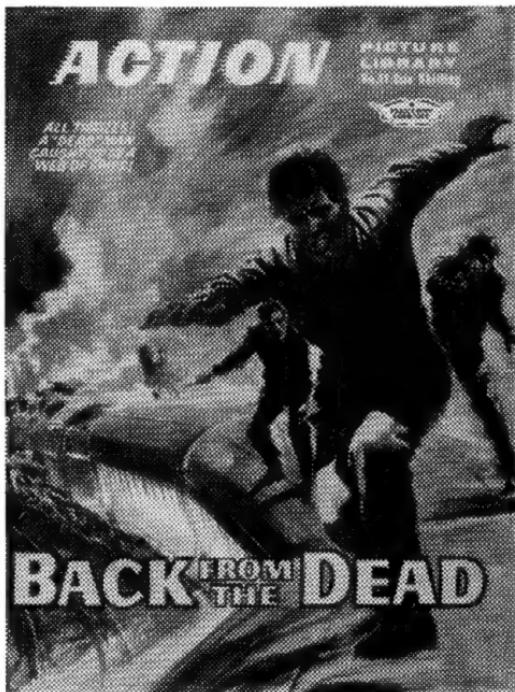


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*Tough...Dramatic...*

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